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Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
CU-04 /065 W
----------086398 130646Z /13
R 130611Z MAR 78
FM USLO PEKING
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 106
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 0661

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT CH
SUBJ: THE GANG OF FOUR CAMPAIGN CONTINUES

1. SUMMARY: A MARCH 11 FRONT PAGE PEOPLE'S DAILY "SPECIAL COMMENTATOR" CALLS FOR THE ELIMINATION OF THE "PERNICIOUS INFLUENCE OF THE GANG OF FOUR IN POLITICAL LINE, IN POLICIES AND IN STYLE OF WORK," BUT ITS LACK OF FOCUS REFLECTS CONTINUING UNCERTAINLY OVER THE FUTURE OF THE CAMPAIGN. THE COMMENTATOR INTIMATES THAT "RECTIFICATION" AND ADDITIONAL PURGES REMAIN CONTROVERSIAL QUESTIONS DESPITE AN APPARENT COMPROMISE JUST PRIOR TO THE FIFTH NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS. END SUMMARY.

2. A MARCH 11 PEOPLE'S DAILY FRONT PAGE "SPECIAL COMMENTATOR" CALLS FOR THE COMPLETE ELIMINATION OF THE "PERNICIOUS INFLUENCE OF THE GANG OF FOUR IN POLITICAL LINE, IN POLICIES AND IN STYLE OF WORK." THE COMMENTATOR QUOTES FROM CHAIRMAN HUA KUO-FENG'S WORK REPORT TO THE FIFTH NPC THAT THE INVESTIGATION INTO THE "FACTIONAL SET-UP
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OF THE GANG OF FOUR" IS LARGELY COMPLETE BUT SOME UNITS AND AREAS STILL NEED TO SPEED UP INVESTIGATION WORK. THE COMMENTATOR UNDERSCORES THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS TASK: IT IS A QUESTION OF IMPLEMENTING THE "GREAT LINE OF THE ELEVENTH PARTY CONGRESS (AUGUST 1977)" AND IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY IF THE MODERNIZATION EFFORT IS TO SUCCEED. HE ALSO QUOTES CCP VICE CHAIRMAN YEH CHIEN-YING AND TENG HSIAO-

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PING, AS IF TO SHOW THAT THE WHOLE LEADERSHIP AGREES THAT
THE CONTINUING CAMPAIGN MUST BE GIVEN TOP PRIORITY.

3. BUT THE CLOSEST THE COMMENTATOR COMES TO CALLING FOR
A NO-HOLDS-BARRED RECTIFICATION OF INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS
IS HIS WARNING THAT "ORGANIZATIONAL INVESTIGATION
WORK IS COMPLICATED AND VERY DIFFICULT; A LOT OF EFFORT
AND TIME STILL MUST BE EXPENDED." WHILE THERE IS NO CHARITY
DISPLAYED TOWARD THOSE WHO HAVE COMMITTED ERRORS, AND NO MENTION
OF CURING THE ILLNESS TO SAVE THE PATIENT," THE MAIN EMPHASIS IN
THE ARTICLE IS ON THE MORE INNOCUOUS AREAS OF POLICY, "WORK
STYLE," THOUGHT AND POLITICAL LINE.

4. COMMENT: THE LACK OF FOCUS IN SPECIAL COMMENTATOR'S
ARTICLE SUGGESTS THAT THE RECTIFICATION ISSUE IS STILL
CONTROVERSIAL AND UNDER DEBATE. A SERIES OF HARD-HITTING
MEDIA ARTICLES IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY INDICATED THAT
SOME PRC LEADERS, POSSIBLY INCLUDING TENG HSIAO-PING AND
HIS SUPPORTERS, WERE ARGUING FOR A MORE THOROUGH HOUSE-
CLEANING THAT COULD POSSIBLY REACH THE TOP LEVELS OF THE
LEADERSHIP. HOWEVER, HUA KUO-FENG'S WORK REPORT TO THE
FIFTH NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS SUGGESTED THAT A
TEMPORARY COMPROMISE HAD BEEN REACHED: THE CAMPAIGN WOULD
CONTINUE, SOME UNITS WOULD BE "RECTIFIED," BUT THE FOCUS
WOULD BE ON STUDY AND POLICY ORIENTATION. THE MARCH 11
ARTICLE ATTEMPTS TO DEFINE THE PARAMETERS OF THE CONTINUING
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CAMPAIGN BUT ALSO INDICATES THAT THE COMPROMISE MAY BE
FRAGILE AND ARAS OF AGREEMENT RATHER NARROW.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARTY LINE, DISSIDENT FACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PEKING00661
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780111-0200
Format: TEL
From: PEKING
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780375/aaaacltj.tel
Line Count: 97
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a64774c8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3352196
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE GANG OF FOUR CAMPAIGN CONTINUES
TAGS: PINT, CH
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a64774c8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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